

**SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN
(PUBLIC PARTICIPATION)**

April 17, 2007

7:00 PM

Mayor Guinta called the meeting to order.

Mayor Guinta called for the Pledge of Allegiance, which was led by Alderman Roy.

A moment of silent prayer was observed.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Roy, Gatsas, Long, Duval, Osborne, Pinard, O’Neil, Lopez, Shea,
DeVries, Garrity, Smith, Thibault, Forest

Fourteen Aldermen were present.

Mayor Guinta advised that the purpose of the special meeting is to give residents of Manchester the opportunity to address the Board on items of concern affecting the community; that each person will be given only one opportunity to speak; that comments shall be limited to three minutes to allow all participants the opportunity to speak and any comments must be directed to the Chair.

Mr. Gene Mackey, 15 Keene Street, Bedford, NH stated:

Mr. Mayor, I’m not a resident, but I am an employee of the City and I’d like to take this opportunity to talk to the Board. I am the Administrative Services Manager for the City’s Welfare Department. I am also the chairperson of the City’s Quality Council, the chairperson at Bedford Community Television, and a member of the Board of Manchester Community Access Media. I’m very proud to say that I’m a contributor and writer for the City employee newsletter called *City Matters*. I know a lot of you here, and I’m not trying to impress you with any of my involvement in those organizations that I mentioned. I mention them solely to express my advocacy for improved communications in the workplace and in the community. Last evening at this time, I, like millions of Americans, was glued to my television watching the coverage of the senseless massacre at Virginia Tech. What struck me as I listened to virtually every student that was interviewed was that he or she mentioned the lack of adequate communications during the two hour timeframe between the first shooting in the dormitory and the carnage that took place in the classrooms and hallways. Most of the students were totally unaware of the first series of events and continued on their normal activity. I can’t help but feel that with better communications, a number of the 32 students and faculty that were slaughtered might very well be alive today. This evening I

want to talk to you briefly about *City Matters*. At a previous budget session a discussion took place during which the cost of publishing *City Matters* was compared to the cost of publishing a quarterly MCL Notes by the City of Manchester. And I know Alderman Garrity had a lot of questions and was very involved in the discussion there. I believe that a number of you were left with the impression that MCL Notes was produced at virtually no cost to the taxpayers. I want to correct that impression. Mr. Mayor and Aldermen, nothing is free. Here's some information that I was able to gather today after a meeting with the Quality Council. The average cost to print two-sided color copy on a copier owned by the City or by the Library is thirty-seven cents per page, or \$1.48 for a four-page newsletter. And I must say they do a nice job on it. But that only includes the cost of the toner, and most importantly not the cost of the staff that put the publication together. From the information I was able to obtain, it takes at least five people working for six hours to develop one issue of MCL Notes. At a combined estimated pay rate of \$111 per hour, that's a cost of 666 bucks. Not free. And that's just to assemble the material. Then you have the other cost of putting the graphics together, so you get a beautiful finished project. I don't know how many hours is spent on the graphics but whatever time it is, it's not free. Please don't misunderstand me. I'm the last person to say, eliminate MCL Notes. I'm just saying it's not free. We've made great strides with *City Matters* over the years. Please don't take it away. We need more and better communication with employees. It amazes me that in the year 2007, over a quarter of the City side employees have no email or internet access. The president of Delta Dental, our dental insurance provider, communicates every day via email with each and every of the company's employees. By the way, Delta Dental was voted one of the ten best companies to work for in New England. The City of Manchester was voted one of America's best places to work and to live. We should have a top-notch communication network. The Quality Council voted recently and it was determined the number one issue they felt we had to address is communications and improving them. Please don't eliminate an important part of the City's communication network. Put money back in the budget to allow the continued publication of *City Matters*. Good communications are no longer a luxury. This was proved last night. Good communications are a necessity. I thank each and every one of you for the support you've given the Quality Council over the years. Thank you.

Amy Laroche, 889 Elm Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I'm the assistant director for the Manchester Area Convention & Visitors Bureau. I'm here today to invite the Board of Mayor and Aldermen and the Manchester residents to attend Mallard Madness, a duck race with a new twist. Mallard Madness is a family-friendly event filled with activities and duck racing. The MACVB has teamed up with the New Hampshire Fisher Cats, the Hilton Garden Inn, Hampshire First Bank and Jillians to host activities throughout the day. Perhaps the most interesting part of the day is the twist. The Manchester Area Convention & Visitors Bureau and the Lewis-Berger Group have partnered together to create a manmade alternative to the Merrimack River. On the day of the event, thousands of yellow rubber ducks will be ducking down Depot Street on the super manmade water slide. The first to cross the finish line will win a \$1,500 CD by Hampshire First Bank,

Southwest-Airline tickets, and a hotel stay. Tickets can be purchased the day of the event, scheduled for May 5th at 4:30. For ticket locations visit *manchestercb.com*. Tickets are \$5 each or five for twenty. We hope to grow Mallard Madness into an annual event that residents and visitors look forward to, and will further aid the City's overall marketing efforts. The CVB thanks you for your time and your continued support.

Robert Tarr, 318 Spruce Street #3, Manchester, NH stated:

Obviously I didn't make it to the Lands & Building Committee tonight, and I just wanted to make a couple comments on the JacPac site. Before I begin I just want to let you know that I do have full regard for Dick Anagnost, his ability to try to help with Manchester's economics and so forth, and I'm not about to say I don't believe in these plans. I do believe that his plans are very concrete. They seem very real and very nicely done. However, I think before we just jump through that hoop of fire, I think that we should look into all economic possibilities for the JacPac site. Obviously the City does own the JacPac site, and if you look at it, and many residents do agree to this, that it would be a perfect opportunity for a perfect transportation hub, much like that in the South Station down in Boston, where more transportation would be allowed into the City through the bus system. Also, there is a rail service that is currently still active in that area. So in the future, if rail service was to come into Manchester, it would be a perfect location for that area. Again, if it's only going to cost the City \$3.6 million to clean up the site, and to think of the revenue generated for years to come from that site, and the City that owned it, I think it would be much more beneficial for the City to look at all aspects prior to accepting a full proposal from what Dick Anagnost has mentioned. Thank you.

Glenn Ouellette, 112 Auburn Street, Manchester, NH stated:

One of the economic problems that we have in this City is that you people aren't moving on certain things. In May of last year, Your Honor, you and the Aldermen decided to negotiate with individuals on two of our parking lots in the Millyard, that we were told back in July of last year, we just started, give it some time. Well, it's going to be a year this coming May and we still have not seen any guarantee. I don't want to see the Pandora building torn down. I saw the fire trucks there last Friday night. This is what's going to happen if we don't move on this project. It's going to be torn down, then you'll get your parking lot, but you won't get anything else. There ain't much taxes in that. Last night you held a public hearing. You're supposed to meet the regulations of the federal government because you receive federal funds in this budget. I personally do not think you met them last night. You did not hold it in a hall that was big enough. I don't understand why all of a sudden you decide to use City Hall, when you've never used it before. You've always used the high school gym. And then you limit people three minutes to speak. Not at a public hearing, you don't do that. That's not democracy; that's controlled democracy. And I'm hoping this is not what's going to happen to Manchester in the next few years, where our officials are going to be controlling the people. That's not democracy. The Highway Department. Nine million dollars is brought in from the Highway Department. Your Honor, you would think

that for the cut that you've made drastically in the Highway Department that you're going to receive that \$9 million next year? And Alderman 8, do you really think your project is going to get done? I don't think so. It will get done but at a much higher cost because we won't have the manpower to do that project. And that's only one project. You didn't just cut from the Highway Department the nine positions that are now open, but if it comes to its fruitality, you will lack twenty men. Twenty men. That's not nine. You can bump all you want. At the very end someone is going to get laid off because nine does not make twenty. I want to have a tax cut as bad as you all do. It's good for the City. But I don't want it to destroy the services. And don't tell me it's not going to be cutting services because that's just a laugh. We will be cutting services. One of the main reasons why our schools are not in session during storms, especially this winter with the light winter that we had, was because our sidewalks were not plowed in time. That's destruction to the entire City. I'm going to leave you with a note. I would rather see this City not have a tax increase this year, but also not have a service cut. If you come up with a budget the same as last year, you will have had your tax cut, Your Honor, because that would be the first time in many years that taxes would not have gone up, without the loss of services. Remember the last time we had a tax cut? It was \$7 million that came from the State of New Hampshire that was supposed to be used for the education of our kids, and we've suffered for it ever since. We still cannot buy enough books for every student. We should be ashamed of that. You told last year some of the department heads to do certain things and it hasn't been done. You still, the third year in a row, have not funded the position that you've created for three years in a row now to enforce ordinances. Do you know that 51% of your problem is trash? You know that because Matt has already told you that, the people who are in charge of the team. You solve the problem by saying we're going to create a position, but you know, talk is cheap. How about doing some action, people? Hire this guy and let's solve the problem. Let's solve the problem. The trash is not going away and neither am I, because starting next month I have twenty new junk yards throughout the City. There's enough to go to every ward, and they're not pretty. And that only tells me that for the past years we have not taken care of the problem, and it's mounting. Let's keep this City in low taxes, but let's not cut the services that are badly needed. Thank you.

There being no one else present wishing to speak, on motion of Alderman Thibault, duly seconded by Alderman Pinard, it was voted to take all comments under advisement and further to receive and file any written documentation presented.

This being a special meeting of the Board, no further business was presented and on motion of Alderman Smith, duly seconded by Alderman Garrity, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk